

Notes on Meeting
Steering Committee for the Survey of State Library Agencies
September 11-12, 2002

The Steering Committee for the Survey of State Library Agencies met on Wednesday and Thursday, September 11-12, 2002 at the Embassy Square Suites, Chevy Chase Pavilion, 4300 Military Road Street NW, in Washington, DC. Mr. Shubert called the meeting to order at 1 p.m. on Wednesday.

Present were: Mary **Chute** (Deputy Director for Library Services, IMLS), Denise **Davis** (NCLIS Statistics and Surveys Director), Suzanne **Dorinski** (Census), Michele **Farrell** (IMLS Office of Library Services), Barbara **Holton** (NCES) Elaine **Kroe** (NCES), Libby **Law** (Data Coordinator, South Carolina State Library), Mary Jo **Lynch** (ALA Office for Research and Statistics), Kim **Miller** (NCLIS/LSP), Kate **Nevins** (ASCLA, SOLINET), Patricia **O'Shea** (Census), Amy **Owen** (Utah State Library Director), Jeffrey **Owings** (NCES Associate Commissioner for Library Surveys, Longitudinal Studies, and Elementary/Secondary Studies Division), Joannell **Porter** (NCES), Cindy **Sheckells** (Census), Joseph F. **Shubert** (New York State Librarian *Emeritus*), Diana Ray **Tope** (Director, Cherokee Regional Library System, Georgia), Lamar **Veatch** (Director, Alabama Public Library Services), and Barratt **Wilkins** (COSLA, State Librarian, Florida State Library), Robert S. **Willard** (NCLIS Executive Director), Jeff **Williams** (NCES), and Alan **Zimmerman** (Data Coordinator, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction). *(All listed here were present for the entire meeting, except for Mr. Owings, Ms. Chute, and Mr. Willard who were present only on Wednesday, September 11, and Ms. Farrell and Ms. Sheckells who were present only on Thursday, September 12).*

Excused were Bruce Kingma (Syracuse University), Suzanne **Miller** (State Librarian, South Dakota State Library) and Johnny **Monaco** (Census).

(1) Introductions

Members and guests introduced themselves.

(2) Chair's Remarks

Mr. Shubert noted that this is the first Steering Committee meeting on Patriot Day, noting that the meeting at this time in 2001 was canceled because of the attacks on the Pentagon and the World Trade Center and the crash of United Flight 93. He commented briefly on the importance of our daily professional work and the work of Committee in the light of the services that libraries provide in support of a democratic society. He read brief passages by Archibald MacLeish (Distinguished poet and Librarian of Congress), Paul LeClerc (President of The New York Public Library), and President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

(3) Recent Developments and Plans in NCES

Mr. Owings described several recent developments. He noted that Gary Phillips still heads NCES in Acting capacity as Deputy Commissioner. He said that he expects the NCES reauthorization to include language assuring the continued operation and improvement of the library statistics programs.

He pointed out the excellent response improvement rates in the library statistics program, noting that school library media specialist responses to the Education Longitudinal Survey were 95 percent – the highest response of all groups surveyed. That study is gathering information from high school sophomore students, teachers, school library media center staff, parents, and others on study, school participation, and library use. In response to a question, he said that public librarians may also be asked for information in 2002.

He reported that NCES and Census have done remarkable work that is resulting in more timely release of the several E.D. Tabs. He expressed concern that a recent customer survey indicates that public library people are not using the FSCS public library data.

In ensuing discussion, Ms. Nevins, Mr. Veatch, and Ms. Owen recommended that NCES and NCLIS work with COSLA in developing regional workshops for State Library Agency continuing education coordinators, helping them and other StLA staff to learn more about the E.D. Tabs and the usefulness of the data.

Similar programs might be scheduled for ALA and regional library organizations. Ms. Owen emphasized the need to develop power point and other instructional devices that would help people learn more about the data reports and the technology available to use the data.

Mr. Williams pointed out that in recent months, NCES has released FSCS public library data for FY 1998, FY 1999, and FY 2000. Next releases are expected in February and July 2002. FY 2001 public library data are expected to be released in March 2003.

The School Library Media Center 2000 survey of 13,000 schools (preliminary data) was released in May 2002, with a fuller report scheduled for release in 2003.

Budget projections for FY 2003 look stable although part, or all, of FY 2003 funds may be available only under continuing resolutions.

Ms. Holton reported that the FY 2001 StLA data is being adjudicated within the next week. Ms. Kroe said that the adjudicated data should be on the website in November.

(4) COSLA Research and Statistics Development

Mr. Wilkins described some of the problems that State Library Agencies and their Chief Officers are facing as their states deal with tough economic situations. He also pointed out widespread leadership changes in the agencies: 31 of the chief officers now in office

have been appointed within the last six years. Nineteen were appointed before 1996.

He noted the delay in reauthorizing LSTA because of Congress's focus on other demanding issues of national security, the economy and corporate crises, and the November elections.

He commented on the quality and usefulness of the StLA FY 2001 data as shown in the draft that is now being adjudicated. As one of the readers of the draft for adjudication, he emphasized the usefulness of the data, particularly in this economy and public expectations for economy.

He urges that people concerned about state libraries promptly read the "highlights" pages in the report, use information in the tables, and call it to the attention of others. He said the survey data (and the data in the "Working Papers") are useful and that we need some "testimonials" for the survey products, particularly since some chief officers appear to lack interest in or commitment to statistical data. One of the strengths of the survey is the fact that, as an NCES-produced report, it provides credibility for comparisons and trend information.

He also commented on the relative anonymity of the NCES data, pointing out that the September 1, 2002 issue of *Library Journal* article on the Texas State Library ("Challenges as Big as Texas") obviously uses key data from the StLA E.D. Tabs, FY 2000.

He noted that the COSLA Research and Statistics Committee has followed the development of the NISO Emetrics questions that will appear in the 2002 StLA survey data collection and is cooperating with Denise Davis in such developments. He also reported that J.D. Waggoner, recently appointed State Librarian of West Virginia, will join the COSLA Research and Statistics Committee in 2003.

He pointed out that the packet for this meeting includes memos from members of the COSLA Research and Statistics Committee in response to the Steering Committee's March 2002 request for advice on an editing question relating to reporting on state library kiosks.

In his concluding comments he endorsed the earlier discussion of the need for the kinds of continuing education that can lead to more awareness of the StLA data and how to use it productively.

(5) NCLIS Developments that May Affect StLAs

Mr. Willard commented on the contradictions in today's information environment and the erroneous impression that some people have that the Web has rendered libraries obsolete. He used personal anecdotes to illustrate that both are needed in today's world, and each has strengths in helping people secure information for one's particular need. He asserted

that libraries are indispensable and confirmed the Commission's interest in all libraries and all types of libraries.

He reported on the current status of the Commission and efforts to secure an appropriation of \$2.8 million for FY 2003. He pointed out that this amount is needed to pursue key policy issues, including E-rate and intellectual property. If the government operates on continuing resolutions for part or all of the year that starts October 1, the NCLIS funds will likely be \$1 million. He described a Senate "Dear Colleague" letter that seeks support for the larger amount. He noted that the White House has not sent to the Senate nominations for Commissioners since December 1999. There are four Commissioners at the present time, constituting an executive committee for legal purposes.

He noted also that (1) the House markup of legislation reauthorizing LSTA creates a new board of library and museum advisers for IMLS, including the NCLIS Chair and (2) the Commission has the authority to accept contributions.

In response to a question, Mr. Willard said that editing of the report of the April 26, 2001 NCLIS hearing in Cincinnati on "School Libraries, Knowledge Navigators in Troubled Times" is nearing completion.

(6) IMLS Developments that May Affect Fiscal Reporting and StLA programs.

Ms. Chute reported on improvements in managing LSTA data on state based programs and key IMLS initiatives of interest to the Steering Committee.

Nine states this year are filing online reports on their administration of their state-based LSTA programs to IMLS. Their doing so is a pilot to test that means of reporting. All states will soon submit reports and a five-year evaluation of their LSTA programs.

IMLS continues to consult with the states in planning to implement a new LSTA reporting process. An RFP has been let to analyze the five-year evaluation plans. The Fall 2002 and 2003 IMLS conferences will deal with indicators for various types of LSTA programs and measurement of outcomes. Indicators under consideration will deal with "investment" in six key areas: Education, Access, Tools for the future, Families and children, Communities, and Cultural heritage.

IMLS awaits word on the proposed \$10 million for a new Leadership Grants program to promote education and recruitment in the library field. Staff are ready to launch the program quickly.

She also reviewed the current status of LSTA reauthorization. Many members of the Congress are concerned that the program be re-authorized before the end of the current session. Some 94 House Members and 22 Senators have signed letters to their respective leaders urging action. The library community's lobbying efforts focus on increased funding.

Ms. Chute affirmed that Ms. Farrell would continue to be the IMLS liaison to the Steering Committee. Ms. Chute hopes to attend parts of Steering Committee meetings as her schedule permits.

(7) The Task Force on Reporting Categories

At the March 2002 meeting, the Steering Committee agreed to establish a task force on reporting categories with Mr. Zimmerman as Chair. Since that meeting, Mr. Zimmerman, Mr. Wilkins, and Mr. Shubert developed a memorandum assessing the need for the task force and its work program. Mr. Zimmerman reviewed major points in the memorandum (dated September 3, 2002).

The ensuing discussion indicated that, in addition to the points in the memorandum, it appears that attention is also needed for data on numbers of people who live in “un-served areas” in each state, and for the classification of statewide service expenditures, such as the purchase of statewide databases licenses.

The Steering Committee approved the following Charge to the Task Force as outlined in the September 3 memorandum:

To review the phrasing questions in parts O (Policy Questions), K (Financial Assistance to Libraries and Systems) and L (LSTA State Program Expenditures) for the purpose of improving StLA data in these areas.

In addition to Mr. Zimmerman, members of the Task Force are Ms. Davis, Ms. Farrell, Ms. S. Miller, Mr. Shubert, and Mr. Wilkins. Mr. Zimmerman said that he would be glad to have additional members on the Task Force.

The Task Force will present a preliminary report at the March 2003 meeting, and its final report and recommendations by the fall 2003 meeting, with the expectation that the StLA Steering Committee’s recommendations could be used in the FY 2003 or 2004 StLA surveys.

(8) Update of the “Prospectus” for the StLA Steering Committee

Mr. Shubert noted that three members of the Steering Committee had sent suggestions for revision of the document *The Survey of State Library Agencies: The Survey and Its Steering Committee*” which was most recently revised in February 1998. The Steering Committee took time to go through the 1998 document.

The following points were identified:

- The purpose of the “Prospectus” is stated in the 2nd paragraph of page one as providing “brief background on the Survey and its Steering Committee, summarize procedures, and be otherwise helpful to the sponsors and participants in the survey.”
- The purpose and rationale for the Survey are also stated on the first page.

- The remainder of the document is organized into four major parts covering practical matters relating to procedures, agendas, voting and records:
 - Users of survey results – p 2
 - Scope of the survey – p 2
 - Process and people involved in developing the survey – p3
 - The Steering Committee – pp 3 –6.

The 4th section includes the charge to the Steering Committee, its composition, and meeting and Steering Committee processes.

In discussion, members made the following suggestions for revising the document:

- Reorganize the document to make it easier for a first time user to find the information she or he needs.
- Re-examine the list of users on page 2, revise as needed, and add a category for the general public.
- Emphasize the Steering Committee’s interest in testing the data’s utility for public policy.
- The prospectus identifies a Vice Chair but we currently are working without such an officer.
- Consider whether there should be a standing committee on survey questions and definitions, or to continue with committees appointed to deal with questions and definitions as needed with ad hoc committees with a defined purpose.
- Update various statements and designations throughout part 4 of the document.
- Clarify that the ASCLA representative should be able to represent both state library agencies and networks.

Mr. Shubert will prepare a draft of a revised “Prospectus” before the March 2003 meeting, and will welcome additional suggestions from Steering Committee members over the next two months.

(9) Evaluation and Improvement of our Data for Public Policy Research

Steering Committee members expressed appreciation to Dr. Kingma and to the Working Paper II Policy Group who advised on the development of policy questions and design of the study. They also noted with pleasure Dr. Kingma’s findings and response to the questions and suggestions that Steering Committee members made after reviewing the early draft of the study in March.

The final report and July 8, 2002 Syracuse University Press release on the study helped secure outside attention to the information in the report and led to the editorial ‘Empirical evidence to support federal funding to state library agencies, Seed Money Works!). The August 2002 issue of *Library Journal*. The editorial included the following notable statement re the report:

...the study is not only easily available, it escapes the taint of being a self-serving product of the state libraries agencies.

The Steering Committee is pleased with the reception accorded the publication of the report in July. In discussion, members noted:

- The *LJ* editorial and their hope for additional notice or reviews in other library publications.
- The assistance of the COSLA Research and Statistics in seeing that every Chief Officer had an opportunity to read and comment on the report before publication.
- It appears that StLA library executives and staff interest in using the NCES StLA data tends to relate to immediate problems in one or more state library agencies rather than broader policy analysis.
- “Secondary analyses” of StLA data should result in expanded use of the E.D. Tabs or, at least, the “Highlights” that appear in each edition of the E.D. Tabs.
- Given competing priorities and the time needed for clearances of Federal press Releases, it may be useful to have releases about the “Highlights” handled through one of the Steering Committee’s members.

Discussion turned to other analyses that would be useful to the five customer groups for the StLA data. Ms. Owen suggested that change is taking place rapidly in StLAs and it would be useful to think now of studies that would compare the 2002 data when it becomes available late next year with a base year of 1992 or thereabouts.

Mr. Veatch named a series of developments in the last five years that are resulting in major changes in StLAs and in their services, including the e-rate, Gates Foundation grants, and cutbacks in state spending in the last two years.

Mr. Wilkins cited data on staffing in the FY 2002 E.D. Tabs as being substantially different from those in earlier years and suggested that an analysis to compare that data with data from FY four, five, or ten years earlier would be useful

Discussion ensued, supporting conducting such a study with attention to program outputs related to staff. The Steering Committee indicated that it would be useful to have a proposal for such a study from the COSLA Research and Statistics Committee. Mr. Williams and Ms. Davis suggested various sources of financial support, including American Education Research grants.

The Steering Committee recessed at 5 p.m. on Wednesday and reconvened at 9 a.m. on Thursday, March 29.

(10) Recent Developments and Plans in the NCLIS Library Statistics and Surveys Office

Ms. Davis reported that the NCLIS project to investigate services to individuals with disabilities has been impacted by the lack of funding. Although an energetic proposal had been prepared last year, all that could be accomplished at this time was a report to NCLIS executive staff and Commissioners outlining a qualitative and quantitative model for understanding information services to individuals with disabilities. Prepared by Howard Harris, the report awaits the review and approval of NCLIS Commissioners before implementation.

She also reported on developments in the NISO Library Statistics standard (Z39.7) project. The standard has been revised and is now available as a Draft Standard for Trial Use on the NISO website: <http://www.niso.org/emetrics>

To reflect the Standard's broadened scope this new edition of Z39.7 has been titled: ***Information Services and Use: Metrics and statistics for libraries and information providers--Data Dictionary.***

As a Draft Standard for Trial Use, Z39.7 will on the website for a year. Over the next twelve months implementation is encouraged; questions, comments, suggestions, and other feedback will be collected. So, please share the news about this new standard with your networks of colleagues and staff.

The completion and release of the revised Z39.7 as a Draft Standard for Trial Use is a major step forward for NISO and the community we serve for a number of reasons:

Z39.7 has been expanded to include terms for measurement of electronic resources and services:

This is the first time that emetrics has been covered in a formal consensus standard;

The data dictionary incorporates de facto library metrics as well as definitions and methods of measurement adopted by international standards groups and US library associations, bringing the standard into alignment with the larger community.

As a web-accessible document Z39.7 offers bells and whistles you won't find in a hard-copy standard: it is fully searchable; it includes links to all the major emetrics projects in the U.S. and internationally; you can comment online; and, a change log is automatically maintained so you can see how the document is developing.

(11) The 2002 Survey

Ms. Kroe reported that the release date for the FY2002 survey and definitions on the Web is October 16. The dates parallel those for the FY 2001 survey:

- October 16, 2002 – Registration/data collection begin
- January 15, 2002 – Deadline for eligibility for Lorenz Award
- February 15, 2003 – Survey “close-out” date
- November 16, 2003 – Release FY 2002 Data to the NCES Website

Ms. Kroe reminded the Steering Committee that the FY 2002 survey includes the measures of electronic use of StLAs, including “virtual visit” and other measures that the Steering Committee has discussed over the last two years. A document with full information on the change is available from Ms. Kroe or Mr. Shubert.

She also provided the following dates for preparations for the FY 2003 survey:

- February 1, 2003 – Draft OMB clearance package sent to the OMB Liaison for review within two weeks
- February 15, 2003 –Draft OMB Clearance package sent to the Office of Chief Information Officer for 60 day comment period
- April 15, 2003 –Final (no flexibility) OMB Clearance package sent to OMB (takes up to 60 days for clearance)
- June 15, 2003 – OMB Clearance
- October 12, 2003 – Survey released for data entry.

(12) Adjournment and Next Meetings

The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 a.m. on Thursday, September 12, 2002. The Committee will next meet in Washington, D.C on March 19-20, 2003 for two half-day sessions, and then on September 10, 2003 for one full day session.

J. Shubert, September, 24, 2002

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